



The Sandy Post

Vol. 72 No. 51

SANDY, OREGON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1982

(USPS 481-180)

Single Copy 25¢

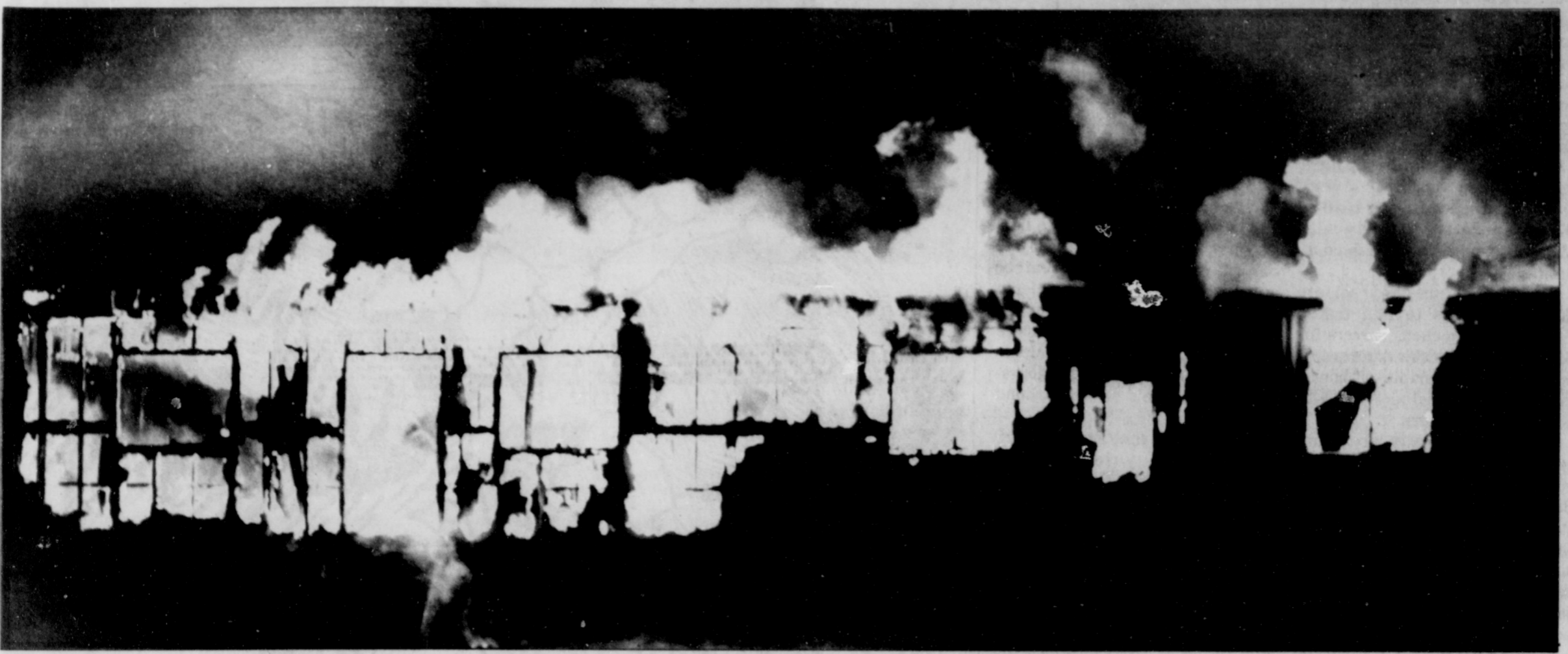


Photo by Scott Newton

Flames swept through the Sandy Union High School district office early Wednesday morning, destroying the double-wide mobile home that housed five SUHS employees. Fiscal and personnel records were damaged in the blaze.

Flames destroy high school district offices

by DAN DILLON

Fire investigators Wednesday sifted through the rubble of Sandy Union High School's district office for clues to the cause of an early-morning blaze that gutted the structure and found faulty wiring.

A breakdown between aluminum wiring and an electrical outlet in the superintendent's office touched off the blaze, said Sandy Fire Marshal Jim Gallagher.

The value of the 1,000-square-foot, double-wide mobile home, which served as an office

building for five people at SUHS, hadn't been determined Wednesday morning, but preliminary estimates by Gallagher put the loss of building and contents at approximately \$50,000.

The fire was reported at 12:23 a.m. Wednesday by a neighbor, Sara Fork, 38425 Park St.

Night watchman Donn Nicholls had checked the area an hour to an hour and a half before the flames were reported and notice nothing unusual. Gallagher estimated the fire smoldered approximately

45 minutes before it was reported.

By the time the first engine arrived on the scene, "the west two-thirds of the trailer had flames roaring out," Sandy Fire Chief Bob Rathke said. The facial boards on the science wing of the school, six feet west of the burning office, had also begun burning.

Firefighting efforts were hampered by a strong south winds which whipped the flames and the close exposure of the school building which had to be protected.

"The exposure there really made it a problem," Rathke said. "It doesn't allow you to

concentrate fully on the fire.

"The building was basically gone when we got there, but the potential for the science wing was there," Rathke said.

"I think our guys did a super job."

Firefighters had the flames knocked down and the science wing protected eight minutes after the alarm. The fire was under control at 12:36 a.m.

Local firefighters were on the scene until 2:10 a.m. mopping up and salvaging records.

Student records are kept in another part

of the school building. However, SUHS Superintendent Jack Peters said the district lost all fiscal records.

Employees' records were in a fire-resistant cabinet. Peters was unsure early Wednesday if they would be salvageable.

A "brand new" copying machine, valued at \$4,000, was destroyed, as well as computer equipment, a terminal and printer, valued at \$10,000. Adding machines (\$800), typewriters (\$600) and other office equipment was lost.

In addition, Peters lost memorabilia from 33 years in education.

Vandals bit Gov't. Camp rest area

Vandals struck the state Highway Division rest area at Government Camp last weekend, creating an extra burden for crews already busy with snow removal.

"This is a terrible time for vandals," said Vickie Rocker, public information officer for the state Highway Division. "Our maintenance people are up to their eyeballs in snow."

Rocker said vandals smashed out 12 windows, ripped doors out of stalls and broke beer bottles in the building.

Because of the timing of the incident and other duties of state crews, she said the Highway Division is uncertain when the facility will be reopened for public use. That will be a particular problem with tourists and skiers traveling through the mountain area during the holiday season.

She added that state crews have nailed plastic sheeting over the windows to keep the pipes from freezing until permanent repairs can be made.

Woman discovers state no 'Scrooge' after all

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

Beverly Stonebrook has decided that the Oregon State Highway Division is no Scrooge after all.

The Brightwood woman recently received word that her battle with the highway division over the brightly-colored bows advertising her annual Christmas sale is over.

Since last Christmas, Stonebrook's ribbons have become a common sign along Highway 26 near the Salmon River Bridge. To former customers, the bows tell them a sale is being conducted at her A-frame house, located just below the west end of the bridge.

To others, the bows spark a curiosity that causes them to follow the brightly colored ribbons to her house where they find Stonebrook's talents as a florist, artist and interior decorator on display. Wall hangings and wreaths decorated with dried weeds

and flowers, cover the walls of her living room and dining room.

On the tables and counters are numerous baskets and jars, filled with her special mixture of potpourri. The scents fill the air.

Also on display are traditional Christmas wreaths, swags and garlands, as well as dried eed and flower arrangements.

Business isn't bad, said Stonebrook, but the going was pretty rough in the beginning when she first opened after Thanksgiving. Somebody was removing her ribbons. She estimated about \$100 worth of ribbons for her Christmas sale alone had vanished.

During her Valentine's Day sale, Mother's and Father's Day, Easter and Veteran's Day, she lost a \$200 worth of ribbons.

Finally, Stonebrook said she discovered who the ribbon thief was. It was the highway division.

Stonebrook said employees of the highway division said she was in violation of state law. She said they informed her if she wanted to place her ribbons along the highway she'd have to have a sign permit.

"I tried to explain to them that a couple feet of ribbon tied into a bow was far from being a sign, but it was no use," said Stonebrook. "So I told them to send me the information for a permit."

Stonebrook said when the thick packet arrived from the highway division explaining "the what fors and how comes" the ribbons were not even close to being covered.

For only \$5 a year, the process which one has to go through just to place a sign temporarily along the highway, was very bureaucratic and difficult to follow, said Stonebrook.

So she decided to try to reason with representatives of the highway division again, hoping to salvage what

she could of her sale.

Stonebrook and highway division representatives failed to clear the air at the meeting. She said she told them she'd hire an unemployed squirrel, and have it place the bows on the very top of her hemlock tree.

"Their response was my tree was even in violation with state law," said Stonebrook.

So in retaliation, Stonebrook placed a couple of dozen brightly-colored bows on top of her hemlock tree. The sight drew the attention of travelers on the highway, and more people began to stop at her sale.

Recently the highway division and Stonebrook buried the hatchet. Ron Failmesger, regional traffic operations supervisor, said he was not aware of any problems between the bows and the highway division.

"The main thing the bows did was make them wonder about them,"

said Failmesger. "We couldn't really figure out what was going on."

Failmesger said Stonebrook's bows can remain up until after her Christmas sale is completed. He said as long as the ribbons are removed and replaced at the time there is another sale, there will be no problems.

The state highway division gets extra federal funds, said Failmesger, for controlling signs along the right-of-ways of federal highways. He said sign control has been here since the "Lady Bird Johnson era," and will probably be here for a long time to come.

When Stonebrook heard that her bows could remain, how did she feel? "I wish the state highway division the merriest of all Christmases, because I'm no Scrooge either."

City sets money aside to boost development

by DAN DILLON

The city of Sandy gave its economic development interests an early Christmas present this week.

As a result, businesses around the state and region are going to have a better feel for what Sandy has to offer businesses.

Monday night, the City Council appropriated money to sing the praises of Sandy, along with Estacada and Molalla, as sites for possible industrial relocation. The local money will match the contributions of the other two members of the Small Cities Industrial Attraction Program, up to \$1,500.

The money is earmarked to serve as a "last resort source for advertising with the Clackamas County Small Cities group," according to City Manager Tom Reber. Any funds remaining will be used specifically for the local effort.

At a Dec. 15 meeting of the steering committee, advertising strategy was spelled out, including the advertising copy which will be placed in newspapers and magazines.

The money will initially be used for advertisements "extolling the vir-

tues of the three small cities," said George Morgan, local chairman of the Economic Development Commission and a representative on the County steering committee. "We intend to do some advertising on our own when our own campaign is underway."

"The whole thrust is that we're close enough to Portland, and then far enough away to have some liveability," he explained.

Along with the three \$1,500 contributions from the participants, Morgan said the program has some money from the recent U.S. Bank of Oregon drive to boost economic development. Some of that will be used to pay for creating lists of potential businesses that might be interested in relocating in the eastern Clackamas County area.

Money from the County itself is tied to the three small cities' willingness to appropriate money also, Morgan said.

The Small Cities Industrial Attraction Program was undertaken about a year and a half ago through the Community Development Block Grant from Clackamas County;



Photo by Dan Dillon

More than 150 area families began picking up Christmas baskets yesterday furnished by Sandy Kiwanis Club members and volunteers. Volunteers, pictured above, worked for the past week sorting food and Christmas presents for the annual holiday project.

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WEATHER

Extended Forecast: Rain at times through Sunday. Highs, 40s to mid-50s. Lows, 35 to 45. Southwest winds 10 to 20.

Precipitation: December Total: 7.53 inches; 3.65 inches above normal.

Troutdale airport		
	H	L
Saturday	47	38
Sunday	48	39
Monday	45	38
Tuesday	46	36